

Child Safe Policy

Policy Owner:	The Manager People & Culture is responsible for the review and currency of this policy.
Endorsement:	Endorsed by the Executive Team on 13/03/2026.
CEO Approval:	Approved by the Chief Executive Officer on 13/03/2026 This policy is valid from the date of CEO approval and remains in force, as amended from time to time, until such time as formally revoked by resolution at a meeting of the Executive Leadership Group.
Next Review Due:	March 2029

1. Purpose

MASP is committed to the safety, participation, and empowerment of children and young people. We have zero tolerance for child abuse and will actively prevent, identify, and respond to risks, concerns, and incidents in accordance with NSW and Victorian Child Safe Standards and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all people engaged by MASP, including employees, volunteers, contractors, students, board members, and stakeholders, across all locations, programs, and online environments in New South Wales and Victoria. This policy applies to all forms of service delivery, including in-person and virtual environments.

MASP's commitment is to the safety of all children, regardless of whether they receive services from our organisation.

3. Policy Statement

All children who attend MASP have a right to feel safe. The welfare of the children who access our services will always be our first priority. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and secure whilst attending our organisation or associated program or activities.

3.1 Legal and Standards Framework

This policy is guided by the NSW Child Safe Standards under the NSW Child Safe Scheme (Office of the Children's Guardian), the Victorian Child Safe Standards administered by the Social

Services Regulator (SSR), and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (Australian Human Rights Commission).

MASP supports lawful information sharing to promote child safety, in accordance with NSW and Victorian legislation.

3.2 Our Commitment and Culture

MASP embeds child safety in governance, leadership, and everyday practice. We maintain clear accountability and communicate our approach openly with policies publicly accessible.

The Board/CEO oversees implementation, managers ensure local compliance, and all workers uphold the code of conduct.

3.3 Cultural Safety, Equity and Inclusion

We value the diverse identities and experiences of children and ensure culturally safe environments — especially for Aboriginal children and young people — and actively address racism.

We support children with disabilities and those from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Actions include, but may not be limited to:

- encouraging culture and rights expression.
- staff training in cultural safety and anti-racism.
- co-design with Aboriginal communities where relevant.

3.4 Child Participation and Empowerment

We listen to children, take them seriously, and provide safe, accessible avenues to share views, raise concerns, and influence decisions.

Actions include, but may not be limited to:

- Aged appropriate consultation methods (surveys, forums, suggestion channels).
- feedback loops to show how input influences decisions.
- additional support for children with communication or access needs.

MASP will provide child-friendly resources to explain children's rights in relation to Child Safe Standards.

3.5 Family and Community Engagement

We proactively inform and involve families and communities in safety initiatives and decision-making.

Actions include, but may not be limited to:

- clear information on rights, complaints, and support services.
- family participation in program design and review.
- transparent communication during incidents and investigations as permitted by law.

3.6 Recruitment, Screening and Suitability

MASP implements child-safe recruitment and ongoing suitability checks including Working with Children Check compliance (NSW and VIC), reference checks, role-specific vetting, risk-based supervision, and probation with performance and conduct review.

MASP screens all workers in accordance with the Probity Checks Policy and takes all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. This includes adherence to departmental guidelines relating to specific programs, such as Residential Care and Foster Care.

3.7 Code of Conduct

We maintain a Code of Conduct describing acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, boundaries, and digital communication rules. The Code of Conduct forms part of the terms and conditions of employment for all workers.

3.8 Risk Management (Physical and Online)

We assess and manage risks in physical environments and online interactions to minimise opportunities for harm.

Actions include, but may not be limited to:

- activity and venue risk assessments, supervision ratios, safe transport.
- online safety protocols (platform approvals, record-keeping, one-to-many communications, no private messaging with children).
- continuous review of emerging risks.

3.9 Training, Induction and Support

We provide induction and ongoing training to equip staff and volunteers to keep children safe.

Actions include, but may not be limited to:

- annual refresher training on child protection, complaints, cultural safety, and online safety.
- role-specific training for high-risk activities.
- supervisor support (in the form of supervision in accordance with the Supervision Policy) and performance review including child-safe responsibilities.

3.10 Complaints, Disclosures and Mandatory Reporting

We maintain child-focused, accessible procedures for concerns, complaints, and disclosures, and comply with mandatory reporting and reportable conduct requirements in each state.

Actions include, but may not be limited to:

- clear reporting pathways for children, families, and staff.
- immediate risk management to ensure the child's safety.
- mandatory reporting to relevant child protection authorities and police when required.
- reporting to relevant NSW and Victorian legislative bodies, in accordance with funding requirements in each state.

Investigations carried out by MASP will be undertaken by suitably skilled and trained staff or outsourced to third parties as required and appropriate.

3.11 Record-Keeping and Privacy

We keep accurate, secure records of screening, training, risk assessments, complaints, incidents, and investigations in line with legal and privacy obligations.

3.12 Continuous Improvement

We monitor, review, and improve our child-safe practices to ensure a culture of continuous improvement and focus on proactive management of child safety.

Actions include, but may not be limited to:

- annual policy review and board report.
- internal audits against NSW and VIC standards and corrective action plans.
- consultation with children, families, and staff on improvements.

3.13 Breaches of this policy

Breaches of this policy will be handled in accordance with the Performance Management, Counselling and Discipline Policy up to and including termination of employment.

Breaches may be referred to police or other statutory agencies in accordance with MASP's legal obligations.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Staff	• Complying with this policy at all times. • Reporting breaches of this policy. • Educating clients to be aware of and report abuse.
Supervisors	• Reviewing risk management for recruitment protocols, consumer awareness, and reporting.

	- Assisting with educating staff regarding policy content and Code of Conduct requirements. - Assisting with review of policy, review compliance with policy and update as required. - Assisting with undertaking audits to monitor compliance, evaluating audits and action as required to improve compliance.
Board of Directors	- Reviewing risk management for recruitment protocols, consumer awareness, and reporting - Monitoring governance requirements for identifying and reporting child abuse.
Director of Client Services	Oversight of reports and investigations relating to child safety as required.
Director of Practice	Monitoring and implementing best practice in relation to child safety.
Manager Incident Response & Investigation	Conducting investigations relating to child safety as required.
People & Culture	- Conducting annual reviews of this policy in conjunction with the Director of Practice. - Communication of this policy to all staff. - Assigning required training to staff. - Maintaining staff records. - Obtaining legal advice and managing disciplinary procedures as required.

5. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy and related policy documents, the following definitions apply:

Child / young person	A person under 18 years of age
Child protection	Any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.
Child safety	Measures to protect children from abuse.
Employees	Employees are all individuals who undertake paid work on behalf of MASP. For the purpose of this policy, this also includes those who work at MASP but whose wages are paid by a third party (e.g. traineeship or labour hire staff).
Volunteers	Volunteers are all individuals who undertake unpaid work on behalf of MASP. This includes but is not limited to non-executive Board Members, mentors, Foster Carers, and students on placement.
Workers	Includes employees and volunteers.

6. Related Documents

This policy is implemented in conjunction with the following related documents:

Policies	• Code of Conduct Policy • Performance Management, Counselling & Disciplinary Procedures Policy • Probity Checks Policy • Recruitment & Selection Policy • Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy • Supervision Policy
Procedures	• Nil
Instructions and Guidelines	• Nil
Forms and Templates	• Nil

7. Legislation and other References

Related Legislative Acts and other sources of Authority	• Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW) • Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) • Children's Guardian Act 2019 (NSW) • Fair Work Act 2004 (Cth) • Office of the Children's Guardian (NSW) • Social Services Regulator (Vic) • Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic) • Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)
Related Standards, Guidelines and other References	• Child Safe Standards (NSW) (Office of the Children's Guardian) • Child Safe Standards / Reportable Conduct Scheme (Vic) (Social Services Regulator) • Client Incident Management System (CIMS) (Vic) (Department of Families, Fairness and Housing) • Child Information Sharing Scheme (Vic) (Victorian Government) • Reportable Conduct Scheme (NSW) (Office of the Children's Guardian)